



STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY: WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

Treasury Secretary Snow – Lock Away Surplus In Personal Accounts: "Social Security surplus funds are spent every day, by Congress, on everything under the sun other than Social Security. This has to stop. We need to make sure that Social Security surpluses are not used for other purposes. We need to lock away the surpluses for Social Security. The best way to do that is to establish the personal accounts. Once money is in a personal account it can't be used for other purposes. It becomes your money with your name attached to it. Personal accounts lock the money away; they secure it for the employee who has paid into the system. They make sure that money is there for you when you retire. It puts integrity back into the system." (John Snow, Omaha (NE) Chamber of Commerce, 7/07/05) [Read The Remarks.](#)

U.S. Treasurer Cabral – Personal Accounts Allow Workers To Pass On Nest Egg: "Those who elect to have a personal account would make regular investments in conservative bonds or stocks throughout their working life. Then either choose to use those investments for retirement expenses or leave them as an inheritance for the next generation. Personal accounts would enable Hispanics' earnings to grow -- with the right pass on their account balance should they die before exhausting it." ("Social Security Reform, A Guide For Latinas," *Latina Style*, 6/2005) [Read The Article.](#)

U.S. Rep. Putnam (Fla.) – Young People Must Engage In Debate: You're probably wondering why you should be interested in this debate. Here's the reason: If you are 20 years old, you are eligible to retire in the year 2052, 11 years after the Social Security Trust Fund has been depleted. ... Conventional wisdom says that young Americans are disengaged from public-policy discussions because they don't believe that changes in the law have any effect on them. Well, if ever there was an issue to engage and motivate young people, it is this. (U.S. Rep. Adam Putnam, "Social Security faces dangerous drop in students' futures," *The Independent Florida Alligator* [University of Florida newspaper], 7/05/05) [Read The Op-Ed.](#)

NEC Director Hubbard – Progressive Benefit Growth Protects Safety Net: Under the president's plan, benefits for future retirees will continue to grow. ... The current system makes promises it cannot keep: As baby boomers retire, it will have to pay out more than it takes in. Without changes, these empty promises will result in across-the-board benefit cuts that will hurt every American, including those who can least afford it. The president believes "progressive benefit growth" is the best way to maintain the Social Security safety net while containing costs that would otherwise require massive tax increases to finance. (Allan B. Hubbard, "Commentary: The Plain Facts," *Wall Street Journal*, 7/5/05) [Read the Op-Ed.](#)

Deputy Social Security Commissioner Lockhart – No Reform Means Slashed Benefits: Well, if we don't make any changes, and we just keep muddling along, if you will, when the trust fund itself disappears in 2041, we'll have to slash benefits. And so, for my children's generation, who had paid in [Social Security] taxes all their lives, they'd see their benefits cut 26 percent, and [benefits would] continue to fall thereafter. And that means also, someone who's 45 today that would be 80 then, would have their benefits cut 26 percent. So it's not just kids; it's [many of the] workers today who'd see that [cut in benefits]. (Jim Lockhart, "Social Security's Ills," *Providence (R.I.) Journal*, 7/3/05) [Read The Q and A.](#)

Former Democratic Rep. Penny and Leanne Abdnor – Refusal To Reform Means Program Cuts Or Tax Hikes: "Unless Congress decides to reduce Social Security benefits, legislators will have only two other options. They can begin cutting other programs or increasing taxes. Let's assume Congress decides to cut government programs to cover the shortfall. ... To give you an idea of the magnitude of the problem, here are some examples of possible program cuts. In the first year of Social Security's cash deficit - 2017 - the shortfall is estimated at \$8.8 billion. Using the current cost of government programs, we'd have enough money to make up this shortfall if we eliminated funding for Head Start, the Labor Department's five worker protection programs and the Supreme Court. By the following year, 2018, the shortfall triples to \$26.4 billion. So, added to the first round of cuts, we'd have enough if Congress also eliminated the entire Environmental Protection Agency, the WIC or women, infants and children nutritional program, the National Park Service and the Federal Drug Administration. ... And it gets worse every year. By now, you get the picture." (Tim Penny and Leanne Abdnor, "The Price of the Trust Fund," *Grand Forks (ND) Herald*, 6/30/05) [Read the Op-Ed](#)